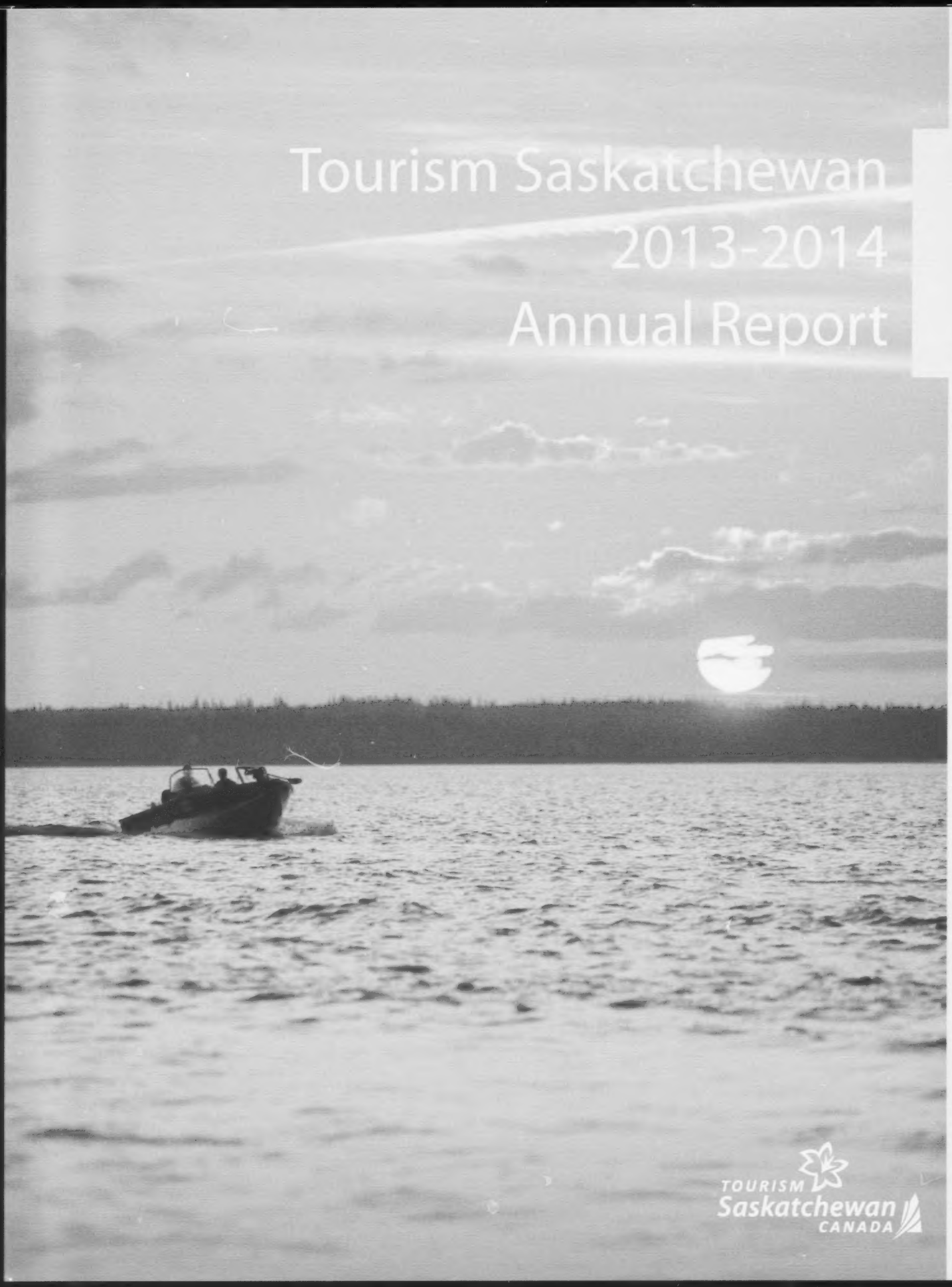
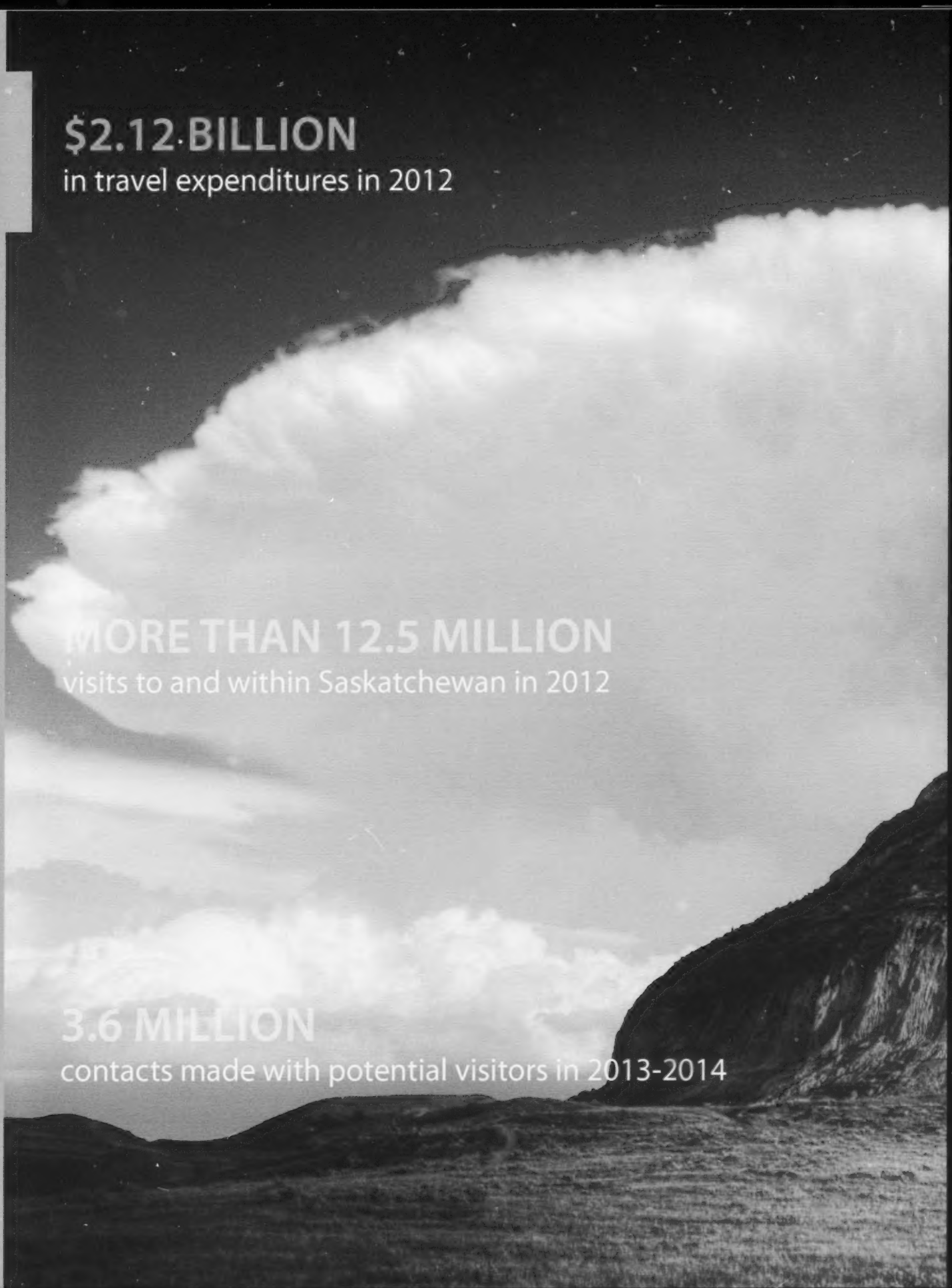
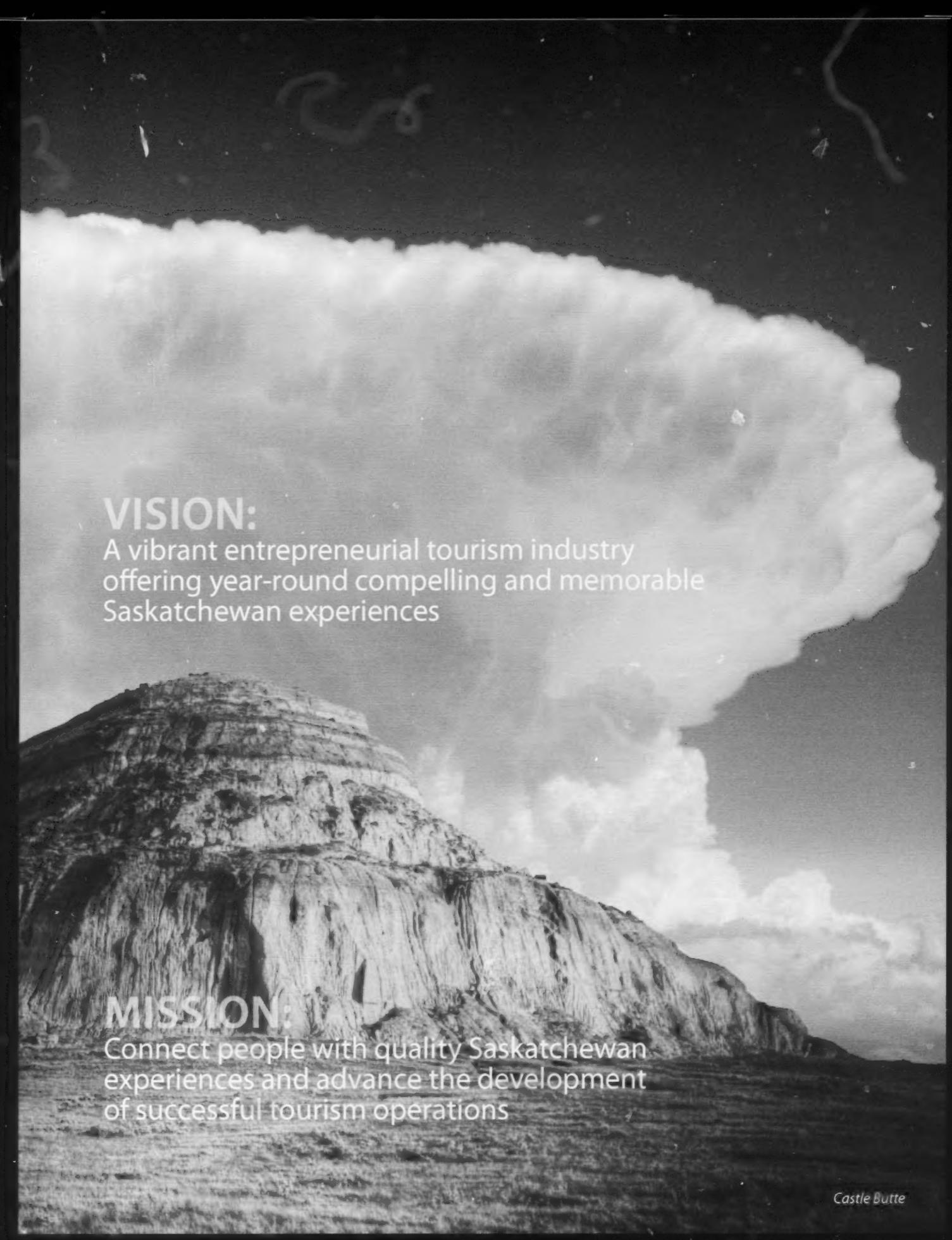


Tourism Saskatchewan 2013-2014 Annual Report

TOURISM Saskatchewan CANADA


$2.12 BILLION
in travel expenditures in 2012
MORE THAN 12.5 MILLION
visits to and within Saskatchewan in 2012
3.6 MILLION
contacts made with potential visitors in 2013-2014



VISION:

A vibrant entrepreneurial tourism industry offering year-round compelling and memorable Saskatchewan experiences

MISSION:

Connect people with quality Saskatchewan experiences and advance the development of successful tourism operations

Castle Butte

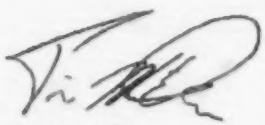
Letter of Transmittal

Her Honour, The Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield, S.O.M., S.V.M.
Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan

May it Please Your Honour:

With respect, I submit Tourism Saskatchewan's Annual Report for the fiscal period ending March 31, 2014.

In compliance with *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*, this document outlines the corporation's business activities and includes audited financial statements.



Tim McMillan
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Introduction

This Annual Report contains information about Tourism Saskatchewan's activities during the past fiscal year (April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014), along with financial statements for that period.

The purpose of the document is to report to public and elected officials on commitments made and other key accomplishments within the identified fiscal period. It outlines results on committed strategies, actions and performance measures identified in Tourism Saskatchewan's *Strategic Plan 2014-2016* and denotes progress made on Government commitments, as identified in *Government Direction for 2012-13: Keeping The Saskatchewan Advantage*, *The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth – Vision 2020 and Beyond*, the funding agreement with the Ministry of the Economy, throne speeches and other statements.

The information contained within demonstrates Tourism Saskatchewan's commitment to effective public performance reporting, transparency and accountability.

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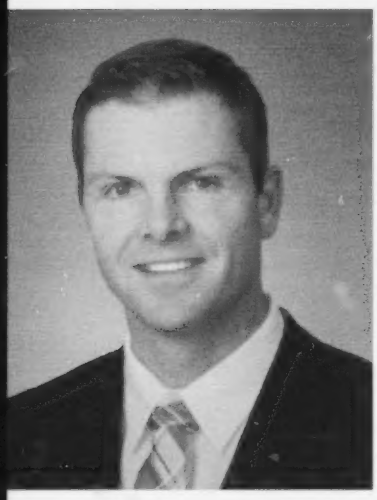
Cover image: Jan Lake

Sundogs Excursions

Message from the Minister



I am pleased to acknowledge Tourism Saskatchewan's work and accomplishments in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

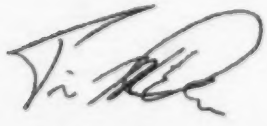
The Government of Saskatchewan recognizes the importance of tourism and the role that it plays in strengthening the economy and making Saskatchewan a great place to live, work and visit.

It is encouraging to see the growth in the province's tourism sector – growth in the number of visitors to Saskatchewan's tourism businesses and attractions and in the amount that travellers are spending. The province's hotel occupancy rate is the second highest in Canada. The number of new accommodation properties is a strong indication of further expansion and opportunities in tourism.

Looking back, 2013 will be remembered as a year of events. Saskatchewan played host to a number of memorable national celebrations – most notably, the 2013 JUNO Awards and the 101st Grey Cup Championship. These and other events brought profile and visitors to the province, showcased Saskatchewan hospitality and resident pride, and made positive impacts on local businesses and the economy.

A priority identified by the Government of Saskatchewan was the completion of the *Saskatchewan Event Hosting Strategy*. The framework drafted by Tourism Saskatchewan, based on extensive industry and stakeholder consultations, will perpetuate the momentum of 2013 and place Saskatchewan in a more competitive position with other jurisdictions bidding on events.

Tourism Saskatchewan is to be commended for its achievements in 2013-2014, highlights of which are reflected in this annual report.



Tim McMillan
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Alignment with Government's Direction

Tourism Saskatchewan's 2013-2014 Annual Report aligns with Government's Vision and four Goals:

Our Government's Vision
A strong and growing Saskatchewan, the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life.

Government's Goals
1. Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people
2. Improve our quality of life
3. Making life more affordable
4. Delivering responsive and responsible government

Government's Vision and four Goals provide a directional framework for ministries, agencies and third parties. Tourism Saskatchewan's 2013-2014 activities align with these priorities in an effort to achieve greater success in the efficient delivery of Government services.

Together, all ministries and agencies support the achievement of Government's four Goals and work toward a growing and prosperous Saskatchewan.

In 2013-2014, Tourism Saskatchewan supported Government's Goals through the following:

- Conducting research and preliminary work in the creation of a strong tourism identity for Saskatchewan
- Completing a strategic plan and framework to support sector growth and advancement and build awareness of Saskatchewan as a tourism destination
- Completing an event hosting strategy for the province and enhancements to the Event Hosting Program
- Developing impressive campaigns and promotional materials to reach key target markets and generate interest in Saskatchewan as a travel destination
- Employing innovative technologies and social media channels to engage consumers and influence their travel choices
- Delivering excellent tourism training and education programs to build a skilled, service-driven tourism workforce
- Engaging in partnerships with industry, stakeholders and Government to maximize resources, align activities and strengthen and expand tourism opportunities
- Delivering professional travel counselling and visitor services to address consumer inquiries, promote Saskatchewan hospitality and contribute to positive first impressions and remarkable guest experiences
- Facilitating discussion of tourism expansion and sustainable lakefront development around Lake Diefenbaker

Message from the Chair

It is my pleasure to speak for Tourism Saskatchewan's Board of Directors and acknowledge the accomplishments of the 2013-2014 fiscal year. The pages of this Annual Report reflect activities and projects undertaken in relation to priorities identified during a comprehensive strategic planning process.

My Board colleagues and I appreciated the opportunity to work with the Executive Leadership Team and participate in this exercise. The process engaged industry and staff in conversations about tourism challenges, strengths and opportunities. These conversations, along with additional research shaped Tourism Saskatchewan's new Vision – "*A vibrant entrepreneurial tourism industry offering year-round compelling and memorable Saskatchewan experiences.*" With the sector's best interests in mind, the organization is clearly focused on its new Mission – "*Connect people with quality Saskatchewan experiences and advance the development of successful tourism operations.*"

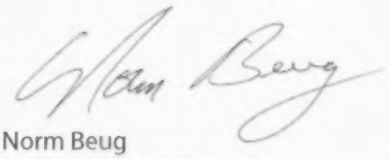
Tourism Saskatchewan has reason to be proud of its accomplishments in 2013-2014. Once again, it earned recognition as an *Employer of Choice*. The increase in the number of tourism businesses designated *Employers of Choice* can be credited to the work of the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC) and to greater recognition among industry that a commitment to best practices yields a positive return.

Cooperation and collaboration are common terms in the organization's vocabulary. In 2013-2014, Tourism Saskatchewan embraced partnerships with government and various stakeholders. Initiatives like the *ThinkSask* campaign and expanded *Saskatchewanderer* program balance Saskatchewan's wealth of tourism experiences with the abundance of opportunities in business, employment, education and a range of fields.

Collaboration with industry drives the success of marketing programs and affords a heavier concentration of messages to reach targeted audiences. Industry development activities bring together many local operators, stakeholders and community leaders to identify and pursue ways and means of creating attractive, tourist-ready destinations. Additional partnerships in 2013-2014 contributed to the success of a number of major events hosted in the province and involved new partners and community organizations.

The unveiling of the *Saskatchewan Event Hosting Strategy* was timely, following on the heels of one of the most monumental celebrations in the province's history – the 101st Grey Cup Championship. Momentum created in 2013, a year of memorable events held in Saskatchewan, is propelled by the Event Hosting Program and active involvement with festival and event organizers and committees.

Like the industry it represents, Tourism Saskatchewan is dynamic and complex. Its success is driven by the efforts of innovative, service-driven people. The Board of Directors acknowledges the work of dedicated professionals in the Regina and Saskatoon offices and four field locations throughout the province. Their commitment to the organization and sector is clearly evident in the highlights outlined on these pages.



Norm Beug
Chair, Board of Directors

Board of Directors

Left to right: Norm Beug, Dana Soonias, Sandra LeBarre, Cory Rideout, Irene Seiferling, Lionel Tootoosis, Brian Simpson

Tourism Saskatchewan is led by a seven-member Board of Directors appointed by Government. A skills-based board, members bring solid business knowledge and experience to their role in providing broad policy direction to the Treasury Board Crown Corporation.

The Board has established three committees to address specific areas of responsibility:

- Audit Committee
- Governance Committee
- Human Resource Committee

Tourism Saskatchewan acknowledges the following individuals for their commitment to serving on the Board of Directors:

- Norm Beug, Chair
- Jack Brodsky, Chair (July 2012 to September 2013)
- Brian Simpson, Vice-Chair
- Sandra LeBarre
- Cory Rideout
- Irene Seiferling
- Dana Soonias
- Lionel Tootoosis

Message from the CEO

For obvious reasons, annual reports have standard requirements. Financial statements must be included, priorities defined and results and progress measurements listed. Tourism Saskatchewan's annual reports traditionally exceed the status quo, highlighting accomplishments of the past fiscal year but also reflecting some of the province's remarkable experiences and the great passion among the sector for showcasing Saskatchewan to visitors.

I encountered this passion as I travelled the province and met with operators. The hospitality that I received made me feel special and eager to return. I definitely shared my positive experiences and recommended these places to friends.

Growth in tourism suggests that many travellers are, likewise, returning to their favourite vacation spots or encouraging others to visit Saskatchewan. Travel expenditures rose almost three per cent to $2.12 billion in 2012 and there were more than 12.5 million visits to and within the province.

Tourism Saskatchewan's own data affirms growing interest in our province and the influence of our efforts on potential visitors. Consumer contacts in 2013-2014 reached 3.6 million, a 50 per cent increase over the previous year. Engaging customers via social media is a factor in this growth. Our number of actions on social media channels rose from 184,000 to more than 619,000. News about great travel destinations and experiences in Saskatchewan is being spread in imaginative, innovative and effective ways that result in a solid ROI – every dollar spent on tourism advertising generates $40 in travel spending.

A new Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities enable more precise focus on key actions to achieve desired outcomes. Work and activities across all departments concentrate on 1) Marketing Saskatchewan Experiences; 2) Developing Saskatchewan Experiences; and 3) Fostering Operational Excellence.

This clearer focus, coupled with the energy and enthusiasm within Tourism Saskatchewan for embracing new projects, netted some impressive results, including the completion of the *Saskatchewan Event Hosting Strategy* and clearly defined criteria and categories that are enhancements to the Event Hosting Program.

Research and industry consultation were critical to this project, just as they were to strategic planning. Consumer research yielded information valuable to both immediate work and long-term planning, and essential to determining a strong, evocative tourism identity for Saskatchewan.

Throughout 2013-2014, Tourism Saskatchewan was engaged in partnerships that brought profile to the province. We were proud to be a part of celebrations and showcases that attracted national attention. Opportunities to be featured on popular programs like *The Amazing Race Canada* are rare. It was an exciting moment when the Saskatchewan segment – "Death by Lentils" – aired in August. Engaging in a partnership with the Saskatchewan Roughriders enabled us to leverage the profile of "Canada's team." As host of *Riderville* – a hotspot during the 101st Grey Cup Festival – Tourism Saskatchewan took full advantage of the chance to mingle with thousands of football fans and treat them to unforgettable Saskatchewan hospitality.

It has been a privilege for me to work with a dedicated Board of Directors and with talented colleagues whose knowledge of tourism and commitment to the industry contributed greatly to the progress made in 2013-2014. The following pages reflect an eventful year for Tourism Saskatchewan and report another period of sound financial management.

Pat Fiacco
CEO

Tourism Saskatchewan

Tourism Saskatchewan promotes Saskatchewan as a tourism destination by providing in- and out-of-province marketing, engaging in industry-government marketing programs, delivering visitor services and leading marketing research and tourism product development, including programs with a particular focus on supporting major sporting and cultural events hosted in Saskatchewan.

Tourism Saskatchewan was established pursuant to *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act* proclaimed on July 1, 2012. A Treasury Board Crown Corporation within the meaning of *The Crown Corporations Act, 1993*, Tourism Saskatchewan is a continuation of the Saskatchewan Tourism Authority, created under *The Tourism Authority Act, 1994*.

The corporation's mandated purposes are:

a) To market Saskatchewan as a tourism destination in domestic, national and international markets;
b) To assist Saskatchewan's tourism industry operators to market their products;
c) To develop and promote the quality of tourism products and services in Saskatchewan;
d) To provide visitor information services; and
e) To undertake any other activities or functions assigned by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Responsibility for Tourism Saskatchewan is jointly assigned to the Minister of the Economy and the Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan.

In 2013, the organization undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process that involved widespread industry consultation. The exercise resulted in a new Vision, Mission, Corporate Values and Guiding Principles.

Vision: A vibrant entrepreneurial tourism industry offering year-round compelling and memorable Saskatchewan experiences

Mission: Connect people with quality Saskatchewan experiences and advance the development of successful tourism operations

Corporate Values

- Nurture a vibrant and creative organization dedicated to serving the industry and the visitor
- Empower each other and our stakeholders to be innovative and to take risks
- Work collaboratively to build effective, respectful relationships and an inclusive approach for the purpose of delivering excellent results

Guiding Principles:

- Alignment – align our activities, internally and with stakeholders
- Collaboration – collaborate for the mutual benefit of the organization and our stakeholders
- Market-driven – ensure initiatives are market-driven
- Accountable – to industry, public taxpayers and Government

Tourism Saskatchewan's *Strategic Plan 2014-2016* identifies three Strategic Priorities:

- Marketing Saskatchewan Experiences
- Developing Saskatchewan Experiences
- Fostering Operational Excellence

With these priorities established, focus and attention are placed on markets, projects and activities that will advance the province's tourism sector and stimulate economic growth.

Organizational Structure

Executive Office
Tourism Saskatchewan's Executive Office is responsible for the framework and day-to-day oversight of all operational activities and serves as the main interface between the corporation, its Board of Directors and Government. Through the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), this department leads Tourism Saskatchewan in the delivery of its mandate and Vision, manages Government and community relations, nurtures stakeholder and industry partnerships and oversees the strategic plan and tactical operations. Additionally, Executive Office provides administrative support to the Board of Directors.

Marketing and Communications
Tourism Saskatchewan's Marketing and Communications division is responsible for campaigns and initiatives that promote Saskatchewan tourism experiences and generate visitation to and within the province. With staff in Regina and four field offices across Saskatchewan, the team works closely with industry, providing operators with opportunities to market their products. These professionals also manage industry and corporate communications, participate in research to determine high-impact target markets that produce the greatest return for the province's tourism operators and deliver professional travel counselling through Tourism Saskatchewan's Regina headquarters and three Visitor Reception Centres. Marketing and Communication's departments include:

- Online Marketing
- Field Operations
- Markets, Advertising and Media
- Communications
- Visitor Services

Industry and Community Development
Tourism Saskatchewan's Industry and Community Development division supports efforts to attract national and international events to the province and manages sponsorships that assist communities with event hosting. The division is responsible for tourism education and training, along with quality assurance, to enhance service standards and address the challenges of a competitive labour market. With staff in both the Regina and Saskatoon offices, the team assists destination areas and communities in developing and coordinating tourism assets to enrich the quality of experiences. Industry and Community Development's departments include:

- Events
- Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC)
- Industry Development
- Quality Assurance

Corporate Services
Tourism Saskatchewan's Corporate Services division is responsible for providing leadership and coordination in the areas of strategic planning and monitoring, financial services, enterprise risk management, legislative compliance and contract management. The division strives to provide excellent internal customer service that enables the corporation to deliver efficient and effective programs and services and connect with industry and stakeholders. Additionally, it manages human resources, oversees technological support functions and is responsible for research, information collection, privacy protection and records management. Corporate Service's departments include:

- Finance and Administration
- eBusiness and Technology
- Human Resources
- Planning and Research

Saskatchewan's Tourism Sector

Lake Diefenbaker

Tourism contributes significantly to the Saskatchewan economy, generating over $2.12 billion in travel expenditures in 2012 for growth of 2.9 per cent over 2011. Expenditures on overnight or longer visits totalled $1.3 billion, an increase of 7.9 per cent.

More than 12.5 million visits were made to and within the province in 2012, up 6.2 per cent from the previous year. Saskatchewan residents accounted for 71 per cent of overnight or longer visits and 55 per cent of expenditures. Other Canadians accounted for 25 per cent of overnight or longer visits and 32 per cent of expenditures, while international visitors, from the United States and overseas, are responsible for 4 per cent of overnight or longer visits and 13 per cent of expenditures.

The Conference Board of Canada's *Tourism Sector Performance Monitor* findings for 2013 indicate Saskatchewan's tourism sector to be among the top three performers in Canada. Overall sector growth for Saskatchewan is estimated at 4.6 per cent in 2012 (slightly behind Newfoundland/Labrador's 5.6 per cent growth rate and Alberta's 5 per cent). Average tourism sector growth for Canada is an estimated 3.4 per cent.

Saskatchewan had the second highest hotel occupancy rate (after Newfoundland/Labrador), recorded at 67.1 per cent. There was 3.1 per cent growth in room supply, a 3.8 per cent increase in room rates and REVPAR (revenue per available room) increased by 2.6 per cent.

Enhancing Communities through Employment and Opportunities

Tourism is a sector of five industries:

- Accommodation;
- Food and Beverage;
- Recreation and Entertainment;
- Transportation; and
- Travel Services.

Virtually all other areas of business or commerce are influenced by activities in tourism.

A vibrant tourism sector, one committed to product and service excellence, reflects a positive image for a destination and contributes to the success of other businesses.

RCMP Heritage Centre, Regina

Saskatchewan has approximately 4,000 tourism-related businesses that provide full- and part-time employment to 55,600 citizens, almost 10 per cent of the working population. There are twice as many people employed in tourism-related jobs than in the mining and oil and gas sectors combined.

Saskatchewan's tourism sector is 95 per cent small- or medium-sized businesses, with a large segment of those located outside of the province's two major cities. Seventy-nine per cent of tourism businesses and events are situated in communities other than Regina and Saskatoon, and 51 per cent of tourism-related employment is in these areas.

Tourism Benefits Quality of Life

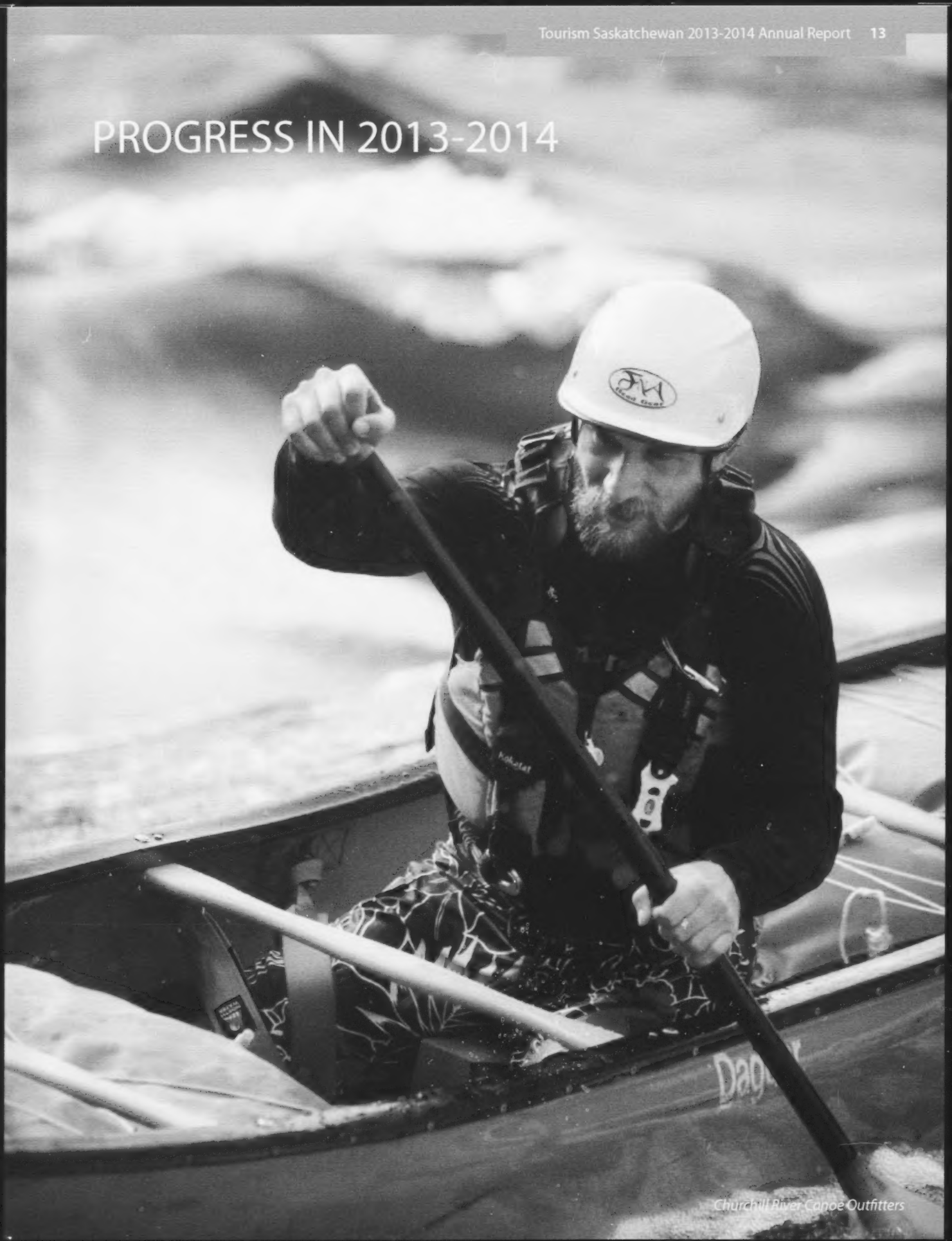
A strong, healthy tourism sector benefits Saskatchewan citizens on many levels. It contributes to the quality of life through public investments in infrastructure, transportation, provincial and regional parks, cultural activities, attractions, events, recreational facilities and other areas.

Tourism is a valuable source of tax revenue for all levels of government. In 2012, tourism in Saskatchewan generated $579 million in taxes on tourism wages and expenditures.

Federal taxes	$280 million
Provincial taxes	$264 million
Municipal taxes	$34.5 million
Total	**$579 million**

Tourism is an important export industry. Export revenue for 2012 totalled $576.6 million. This is new money coming into the province, staying in the province, and benefitting cities and towns, municipalities, communities and the people who live and work in Saskatchewan.

PROGRESS IN 2013-2014



Churchill River Canoe Outfitters

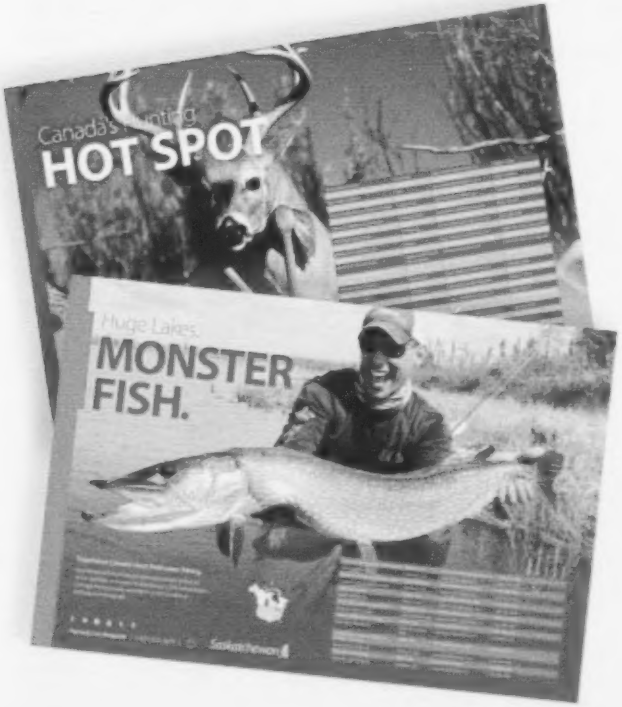
STRATEGIC PRIORITY:
MARKETING SASKATCHEWAN EXPERIENCES

Key Action:

Create and implement a strong tourism identity for Saskatchewan that instils pride in residents and resonates with visitors

Results:

- Research projects in 2013-2014 included post-advertising awareness surveys in Saskatchewan and Alberta to gather qualitative data to assist in the development of a new creative platform.
- Ten focus group sessions, held early in 2014 in Saskatchewan and Alberta, yielded information on how travellers in these key markets view Saskatchewan as a tourism destination. The focus groups also provided deeper understanding of the province's unique strengths and insights to consider in crafting a tourism identity.



Key Action:

Generate excitement about Saskatchewan's tourism experiences in key markets to increase awareness, visitation and expenditures through the following tactics:

- Review geographic and product/experience markets to identify and prioritize key markets
- Develop a market readiness program
- Develop a comprehensive market plan that is in full alignment with the tourism identity

Results:

- Tourism Saskatchewan implemented improved methods of measuring circulation and impressions to ensure reliable data from consumers. In 2013-2014, messages about tourism opportunities in Saskatchewan were seen by **465 MILLION** visitors and potential visitors, targeted through online advertising, social media, consumer and trade shows, television, magazine and newspaper advertising, billboards, radio and publicity generated through travel media, both traditional and online.

  Consumer contacts numbered **3.6 MILLION**, an increase of 50 per cent over figures for 2012-2013. These contacts were made via social media (*Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest*), website visits, live chat, telephone, in-person and through Tourism Saskatchewan's travel literature series.

  The return on every dollar invested in advertising is $40 in visitor spending.

- In 2013-2014, Visitor Services responded to approximately 32,000 inquiries via telephone, live chat, email, direct email, website visits and in-person. A decline in number from the previous year was due to better targeting of activities through the elimination of contests. Approximately 300,000 pieces of travel literature were distributed to consumers through a variety of qualified, tourism-related third-parties.

- Social media engagement and activities (via *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Pinterest*, *Twitter*, *YouTube*, *Tumblr* and *Google+*) proved successful in generating a significant increase in followings: **23,681 in 2012-2013 to over 61,000 in 2013-2014**. Total social engagement actions went from **184,000** to more than **619,000**. Tourism Saskatchewan continued to promote and lead curation of the hashtag *#ExploreSask* across multiple channels. A joint social media campaign with the Saskatchewan Roughriders influenced new followers and *SaskSecrets* subscribers. The monthly newsletter has a subscriber base of over **26,000**.

- Advertising in Saskatchewan and Alberta, primary Canadian markets, involved a mix of television, online and cooperative print advertisements. Television spots aired April to June with spillover into select Canadian Football League games. A total of 185 television spots ran in Alberta, generating over 3.4 million impressions. In Saskatchewan, 1,006 spots resulted in nearly 3.6 million impressions. Forty-three per cent of those surveyed in Alberta saw at least one Saskatchewan tourism ad and 34 per cent could recall one television commercial. In Saskatchewan, 63 per cent recalled at least one tourism ad, while 50 per cent saw at least one spot on TV.

For the second year in a row, full-page, full-colour tourism advertorials were placed in the spring/early summer issues of the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix* and *Regina Leader-Post* as part of the *Saskatchewan Campaign*. Placements were featured in eight Saturday editions over a three-month period – May, June and July. Consumer recall of these advertorials was high. Post-advertising survey research revealed an average of 31 per cent of respondents, in aided recall, saw at least one tourism page advertorial in 2013. The advertorials provided an opportunity for tourism businesses to purchase an ad in the placement(s) of their choice and gain access to an estimated one million consumer impressions.

Online, there were approximately 2.3 million 15-second video pre-roll impressions in Alberta and 1.3 million pre-roll impressions in Saskatchewan. These generated more than 62,000 combined click-throughs to operator websites. Alberta saw approximately 15.9 million banner ad impressions, while the number for Saskatchewan was 5.4 million. Combined, these banner ad impressions generated more 21,000 click-throughs.

- Efforts to appeal to the U.S. fish and hunt markets involved traditional advertising initiatives combined with increased online marketing to balance the need for awareness building with tracked direct-response initiatives. Requests for the *2014 Saskatchewan Fishing & Hunting Guide*, printed in November 2013, are tracked through a landing page.

Online initiatives included 15-second pre-roll videos on *YouTube*, banner ads on *Casale Media* and *Google* network sites, sponsored posts on *Facebook* and email newsletter and banner advertising with *in-fisherman.com*, *gameandfishmag.com*, *midwestoutdoors.com* and *Sports Select*. Over 21 million online impressions promoting fishing were supported by approximately 1.3 million impressions in print-based publications.

Over 4.5 million impressions on television were the result of a partnership agreement with *Midwest Outdoors TV* and *Outdoors with Tom Gruenwald*. A series of ads in *In-Fisherman Magazine*, *Wildfowl Magazine*, *North American Whitetail Magazine*, *Bear Hunters Online Magazine* and *Alberta Sportfishing Regulations Guide* promoted 135 Saskatchewan fishing and hunting outfitters who took part in cooperative advertising.

- Tourism Saskatchewan's travel guides are core marketing pieces for the organization and the sector. The *Saskatchewan Discovery Guide* is a comprehensive travel publication filled with information about communities, events, attractions, parks, history, culture, accommodations, campgrounds, suggested itineraries, opportunities for adventure and recreation, and more. The *Saskatchewan Fishing & Hunting Guide* includes feature stories and articles on operators, individuals and topics of keen interest to U.S. and Canadian hunters and anglers. *The Perfect Drive: Saskatchewan Golf Vacations* and the *Official Saskatchewan Road Map* complete Tourism Saskatchewan's travel literature series. All of the 2014 travel guides were produced on time and within budget for 2013-2014.

  Newspaper drops of the *Saskatchewan Discovery Guide* yielded a high return on investment, as determined in Fall 2013 consumer research. In aided recall, almost 35 per cent of those who live in Regina and Saskatoon and were delivered a guide were able to identify receiving it. Twelve per cent indicated that they planned additional trips or visited somewhere new within the province. Those recalling the guide had a 17 per cent higher likelihood of taking one or more vacations in the province. An estimated spend of $1.8 million across Saskatchewan was a result of these insertions.

- Content marketing strategies were responsible for user-generated content via *#ExploreSask*. Internally, the content collection team created and shared quality video, photo and written content during trips to Big Muddy, Swift Current, Gravelbourg, Prince Albert National Park, Lumsden, Lake Diefenbaker, La Reata Ranch and Waskesiu & Area Wilderness Region. Several events in the province were profiled, including the JUNO Awards, Saskatchewan Fashion Week, MasterCard Memorial Cup, Craven Country Jamboree and the 101st Grey Cup Championship. A one-minute event-themed video for online promotion was created.

- The travel media assistance program provided financial support for 77 individual and group trips resulting in approximately $6.4 million in exposure through print, television and web-based media. Eighteen media trips were issued letters of invitation to assist with border crossing. Several others were provided with informational and photographic support to help them complete travel stories about Saskatchewan. A further $3.1 million of non-influenced exposure was recognized in Canadian and U.S. markets through Tourism Saskatchewan's subscribed media monitoring services.

- Support was provided to 40 separate fish/hunt media trips in the province, accounting for 54 per cent of the travel media assistance program. At least 26 different outfitters worked with Tourism Saskatchewan on hosting media. An informal reception was held prior to the Edmonton Boat & Sportsmen Show to introduce Alberta media to Saskatchewan outfitters exhibiting at the show. Thirteen outfitters pitched story ideas to the 10 media present. Three media trips are confirmed as a result of the reception, with two more in the planning process.

- In conjunction with the 2013 Travel Media Association of Canada's conference hosted by Tourism Saskatoon, Tourism Saskatchewan organized eight specialized tours for 32 representatives of the Canadian media. Two pre-tours were arranged by Tourism Regina for a total of 55 media hosted. The tours provided opportunities to highlight some of Saskatchewan's key destinations and attractions.

- Tourism Saskatchewan hosted international media during a German media FAM (familiarization) tour to southern Saskatchewan and a culinary tour with media from Australia and India. Assistance was provided to a South Korean blogger, as part of a Canadian Tourism Commission initiative. Additionally, the travel media team hosted Chef Valentine Warner (United Kingdom) and his crew filming an episode of *Wild Table: Canada*. Locations included Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Historic Reesor Ranch and the community of Gravelbourg.

- Four key travel trade marketplaces in the United States, Canada and Germany, and one consumer and travel agent event in Alberta were scheduled. Tourism Saskatchewan, in partnership with Tourism Saskatoon, co-sponsored the Canadian Cyber Centre at the National Tour Association Marketplace. Utilizing booth space afforded higher visibility. Connections were made with a total of 775 travel influencers through appointments and various networking events.

- Focus on the German travel market resulted in five tour operators adding individual product listings or a fly/drive itinerary to their product catalogues for a total of 10 new saleable products.

  Two Canadian receptive tour operators have added six new products to their catalogues, which further extends Saskatchewan's reach into key markets. Through initiatives in 2013-2014, Tourism Saskatchewan reached over 4 million consumers and more than 600 travel influencers (including both tour operators and travel agents) in Germany.

- Travel media support contributed to the success of *The Amazing Race Canada* episode "Death by Lentils," which showcased Saskatchewan. The episode aired August 12, 2013 to 2.87 million viewers, making it the most popular program in Canada that week. It also received 3,551 tweets with 540 mentions while trending on *Twitter*.

- Tourism Saskatchewan hosted 10 Canada Specialist Program (CSP) members from the United Kingdom and Germany and one Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) representative from the UK as part of CTC CSP Mega FAM in September. The delegation enjoyed experiences with 19 industry operators. As a result of the FAM, one new tour from the UK was confirmed for 2014.

Grand Prize Winner, 2013 Snap It! The Great Saskatchewan Photo Contest
Good Spirit Lake Provincial Park

Key Action:
Lead and engage tourism stakeholders to promote alignment in marketing strategies

Results:

- Tourism Saskatchewan provides cost-shared assistance for tourism operators to participate in a coordinated provincial advertising campaign. This investment supports partnered activities that promote a tourism attraction, event or experience. The 2013 *Saskatchewan Campaign* was supported by 101 participants, 25 per cent more than the previous year. They invested more than $303,000 of their own marketing dollars into the $760,000 campaign. Partnerships were nurtured for a winter marketing campaign that received cooperative advertising buy-in by 21 operators/organizations that invested nearly $87,000 in the $173,600 campaign. This was a substantial increase over the previous year, which had a campaign total of $93,700 and was supported by 17 partners whose combined contribution was $46,000.

  Along with traditional advertising, *Google Adwords* and *Facebook* proved valuable promotional tools. Fifteen businesses participated in an effort that involved consultation, followed by the ad design, creation and execution. Results reported 47.8 million ad impressions and almost 20,000 click-throughs to operator listings or packages on *TourismSaskatchewan.com*.

- An application-based partnership funding program for consumer marketplaces was introduced to assist operators in attending trade shows that are not part of regular cooperative opportunities. Criteria for the new fund included alignment with Tourism Saskatchewan's strategic markets and with priority products/areas that have potential for increased visitation, economic impact and tourism spinoff. Nine operators were funded to attend seven shows, with a total partner investment of $14,000.

  Through the established consumer marketplace cooperative opportunities, Tourism Saskatchewan supported 76 industry partners to attend 18 shows, an increase of three supported shows over the previous year. Total partner investment was $110,000. More than 37,500 contacts were made and nearly 2 million impressions generated. Tourism Saskatchewan had a booth presence at 11 trade shows, which included seven in Alberta, two in Saskatchewan and two fish/hunt shows in the United States.

- Preliminary discussions began with the Canadian Tourism Commission and several major destination marketing organizations in Saskatchewan (Tourism Regina, Tourism Saskatoon, Cypress Hills Destination Area and Waskesiu & Area Wilderness Region) to explore online collaboration and capitalize on marketing synergies.

- Tourism Saskatchewan assisted Sundogs Excursions in its successful application to the Canadian Tourism Commission's *Canadian Signature Experience* (CSE) collection, bringing Saskatchewan's total to six featured experiences. Members of this prestigious series have an opportunity to reach key international markets through the CTC's global marketing campaigns, travel media, social media activities, travel trade and sales programs. Saskatchewan CSE members: Churchill River Canoe Outfitters, Historic Reesor Ranch, La Reata Ranch, RCMP Heritage Centre, Sturgeon River Ranch and Sundogs Excursions.

- Support continued for a three-year project to promote Saskatchewan as a destination for international airlines and to access more air routes into the province. Partners include Western Economic Diversification, Regina Airport Authority, Saskatoon Airport Authority, Tourism Regina and Tourism Saskatoon. Participation at the World Routes Conference in Las Vegas involved three days of meetings and briefing sessions with airlines. For the first time, the Saskatchewan delegation hosted a booth on the marketplace floor. This effort brought a higher profile to the province and proved an excellent venue for networking with airline representatives. Tourism Saskatchewan's popular green screen offered photo opportunities with iconic Saskatchewan backdrops and props, and 165 international delegates had their photo taken with the two RCMP officers in attendance.

- Tourism Saskatchewan led the celebration of *Saskatchewan Tourism Week* from June 9-15, coinciding with *Tourism Week in Canada*. In collaboration with the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) and the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), an open forum on the state of Canada's tourism industry was hosted in Regina. More than 50 tourism operators and stakeholders from across the province participated in the town hall-style meeting, which garnered significant attention from media and contributed to the 57 articles and news stories related to *Saskatchewan Tourism Week*.

More than 40 community events were scheduled throughout the province. Tourism Saskatchewan's 12th annual *Snap It! The Great Saskatchewan Photo Contest* was launched. Province-wide media coverage – radio contests, newspaper ads and inserts, news releases and interviews – brought profile to the sector and its contributions to the province's economy, image and quality of life.

- A partnership with the Saskatchewan Roughriders in 2013 brought profile to Saskatchewan hospitality and broadened awareness of the province as a great place to travel. The partnership involved a number of initiatives, including: pre-game parties and contests during "away" games in Edmonton and Vancouver; a social media campaign and contest; in-game texting contest and promotion of *Riderville* – leading up to the Labour Day Classic and 101st Grey Cup Championship Game. During the Grey Cup Festival, Tourism Saskatchewan hosted *Camp Saskatchewan*, where contest winners could relax and enjoy hospitality in a unique setting. In the *Fan Zone*, the popular green screen photo booth was reworked into a blue screen to accommodate the many visitors who, decked out in green and white, lined up to get their picture taken in front of a distinctly Saskatchewan backdrop and had fun choosing between fishing or canoeing props. The image was made into a sports button for them to wear and promote Saskatchewan as a travel destination. Over 1,200 visitors from Saskatchewan and across Canada took home this souvenir.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:
DEVELOPING SASKATCHEWAN EXPERIENCES

Key Action:

Champion industry excellence to build unique and memorable Saskatchewan experiences through developing and implementing the following:

- Quality Experience Strategy
- Tourism Human Resource Strategy
- Major Event Hosting Strategy

Results:

- In its final stages of development, a voluntary Quality Assurance Program (QAP) for Saskatchewan's tourism sector will launch its first program streams in 2014. The QAP is an industry-defined process to recognize businesses and organizations committed to delivering quality visitor experiences. Three program pillars provide a focus for the work to establish culture of quality in the tourism sector:
  1. Define – The QAP is a set of quality standards defined and developed by industry.
  2. Share – The QAP provides tourism businesses and organizations with knowledge and support on building a culture of quality with their own business, as well as with others in their industry and the tourism sector overall.
  3. Recognize – The QAP provides recognition for participating businesses and organizations through the profile of the QAP brand and by offering exclusive program and service value benefits for those accredited.

- Research activities in 2013-2014 included participation in a national project – the *Provincial/Territorial Tourism Human Resource Module* – to refine tourism employment data. As well, a contract was initiated to develop new economic impact models to gauge measurement of events and attractions at all community levels.

- The Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC) delivered industry training and skill development products to **4,006** participants:
  - **1,913** *Service Best* workshops and online training, *Service Best* Management, *Service Best* for Teachers, *Selling is Service* and *Showing We Care*
  - **1,826** Risk Management programs – *Serve It Right Saskatchewan* (SIRS), *SIRS Awareness, Workplace Hazard Materials Information System* classroom and online training
  - **116** Partnership Programs – Cook training, *Cook Upgrader, Introduction to Tourism Essentials*
  - **86** Custom Workshops – *Workplace Etiquette, Table Service Techniques, HR Essentials* and *Marketing 101*
  - **65** Trainer Development opportunities – *Facilitator Skills Development Workshop, Workplace Trainer Workshop* and online training

- Involvement continued with the *Canadian Academy of Travel and Tourism* (*CATT*) program, coordinated in Saskatchewan by STEC. Six high schools in the province deliver tourism programs: Charlebois Community School (Cumberland House); John Paul II Collegiate (North Battleford); Bethlehem Catholic High School, Mount Royal Collegiate, and Nutana Collegiate Institute (Saskatoon); and Punnichy Community High School. The *CATT* program promotes careers in tourism to high school students. Integrated into the current high school curriculum, it enables students to specialize in tourism through a successful work and study approach.

- *Ready to Work* (*RTW*) – *Tourism Careers* was delivered by STEC in a number of Saskatchewan communities. Recruitment presentations were made to more than 50 Saskatchewan First Nations. *Ready to Work* is a career awareness, skills development and transition to employment program that assists individuals in finding long-term, rewarding careers in the tourism and hospitality sector. More than 300 individuals registered in the program that had a completion rate of 87 per cent and an employment rate of 76 per cent.

- STEC serves as the Industry Joint Training Committee for Journeyperson in the Food and Beverage Person and Guest Services Representative trades, recognized by the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission. Twenty-four apprentices in both tourism trades were indentured in supported projects last year.

- Tourism Saskatchewan sponsored the development of both the Online Cook Upgrading Program and the Hybrid Cook Apprenticeship Program. Firsts in Canada, these programs combine a productive industry partnership with a non-traditional training approach. A total of 62 experienced cooks enrolled in the Upgrading Program to complete tradesperson training and fully qualify as Cook Journeypersons. The first delivery of the Hybrid Apprenticeship Program involved 12 apprentices, all working in far northern communities. Additional partners include Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology and Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission.

- Enhancements to *Service Best* training included *Service Best Online* and *Service Best en français.* The online version addresses the same learning objectives and employs the same content as the original seven-hour classroom seminar. Hands-on exercises were redesigned for online delivery and a new evaluation model introduced. Online availability provides flexibility and convenience to employers and staff with challenging schedules. The French version of the workshop responds to growing market demand from Fransaskois communities, institutions and businesses across the province.

  The 2013-2014 fiscal year also saw a record number of secondary teachers, 39 in total, attend the *Service Best Teacher In-Service* to deliver *Service Best* to high school students.

- Registrations for *Serve It Right Saskatchewan* (SIRS) were nearly double the historical average of 120 per month during the first three months of 2013-2014. This increase was a result of a targeted distribution of information to employees of permitted establishments, liquor stores and franchise operations. Based on the success of this effort, a new poster was produced and distributed at the end of the 2013-2014 fiscal year. Tourism Saskatchewan undertook the design and distribution, with funding provided by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health on behalf of the Saskatchewan Server Intervention Program (SSIP) industry-led advisory group.

  Extensive revision of *SIRS* occurred in response to 39 changes to provincial liquor policy and 37 changes to legislation and regulations implemented in 2013.

- Tourism Saskatchewan celebrated the 20th anniversary of its Professional Recognition Dinners. Held in Saskatoon and Regina, the dinners honoured 81 new nationally *emerit* certified tourism professionals and 23 apprentices who earned Journeyperson status. Also recognized were 21 *emerit* Property Recognition businesses and 32 *Service Best* businesses. Four Tourism Ambassador Awards were presented.

- Launched in November 2013, the *Saskatchewan Event Hosting Strategy* is a framework for working with communities and stakeholders to grow tourism and make Saskatchewan a top-of-mind destination for hosting events. Tourism Saskatchewan led the strategy development process that involved a survey of event organizers and widespread consultation with event stakeholders. The process resulted in established criteria for Tourism Saskatchewan's application-based Event Hosting Program. Four program streams offer a variety of funding options:
  - Community Annual Events
  - Marquee Annual Events
  - National and International Events
  - Special Tourism Projects

The first application intake was March 31, 2014.

Events supported in 2013-2014

John Arcand Fiddle Festival	$7,500
River Lights Festival	$50,000
Wounded Warriors Weekend	$10,000
Back to Batoche Days	$50,000
Saskatchewan Roughriders Football Club, Riderville	$300,000
2014 Senior Elite National Boxing Championship	$20,000
2014 Skate Canada Challenge Championship	$10,000
Western Canadian Gymnastics Championship	$7,000
Yorkton Film Festival	$10,500
2014 Scotiabank Hockey Day in Canada	$20,000
2014 TELUS Cup	$50,000
2014 Tim Hortons Canadian Ringette Championship	$40,000
SaskTel Summer Invasion	$30,000
2013 & 2014 15U Canada West Open Volleyball Championship	$50,000
Skate Canada National Figure Skating Championship	$5,000
2014 Subaru Saskatoon Triathlon	$50,000
Country Craven Jamboree	$50,000
SaskPower Windscape Kite Festival	$25,000
First Nations University of Canada 35th Annual Spring Powwow	$5,000
Saskatchewan Entertainment Expo	$2,500
PGA TOUR Canada Dakota Dunes Open	$50,000
Saskatchewan Association of Agricultural Societies	$50,000
North American Indigenous Games	$1,446,390
2014 MasterCard Memorial Cup	$667,797
TOTAL	**$3,006,687**

Key Action:

Build a supportive environment through partnerships that enable the sector to fully realize its potential through:

- Identifying opportunities to align activities with non-traditional partners
- Strengthening tourism opportunities in strategic destination areas and product clusters

Results:

- Tourism Saskatchewan engaged in a partnership with the Ministries of Agriculture, Economy and Parks, Culture and Sport to expand the successful *Saskatchewanderer* program. Investment by these four partners enables a full-time, four-season "ambassador" to travel the province in 2014 and, through social media channels, share stories and experiences that showcase Saskatchewan as great place to live, work and visit.

- More than 170 new images were added to Tourism Saskatchewan's online image library. A partnership with the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport resulted in new photography captured at several provincial parks – Cypress Hills, Saskatchewan Landing, Douglas, Buffalo Pound and Lac La Ronge. In 2013-2014, almost 1,000 images were downloaded from the online library. There were 158 requests for still photos, 13 requests for copies of Tourism Saskatchewan's videos and 12 requests for video footage.

- Tourism Saskatchewan represents sector interests on the following provincial committees: Wildlife Advisory Committee, Fish Advisory Committee, Office of the Treaty Commissioner, forestry and land-use advisory committees, Trans Canada Trail and committees functioning under other government ministries and agencies.

- Tourism Saskatchewan and the Ministry of the Economy launched a national campaign – *ThinkSask* – designed to build awareness of Saskatchewan as a great place to live, work, vacation and conduct business. The campaign targeted specific demographic markets in Ontario and Alberta, with secondary markets in Manitoba and British Columbia. A high-energy, 30-second TV commercial ran daily on TSN's *SportsCentre*, as well as on CBC's *Hockey Night in Canada* broadcasts and was featured during every CFL playoff game in November and played twice during TSN's Grey Cup Championship Game broadcast. Complementary marketing strategies included online video advertisement (pre-rolls), social media and media relations to ensure Saskatchewan achieved the highest audience penetration possible. The campaign's call to action directed people to the website *ThinkSask.ca*.

  From October 14 to November 24, the campaign generated **27,090,150** TV impressions and **3,466,113** impressions online, for a combined total of **30,556,263**. This well-surpassed the **15 million** target. Over **42,000** people visited *ThinkSask.ca* during the campaign.

- The *Qu'Appelle Valley Integrated Tourism Strategy*, released in November 2013, was prepared by O2 Planning & Design and supported by the Calling Lakes Planning District, File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, Tourism Saskatchewan and local stakeholders. Objectives and strategies will yield improvements in infrastructure and customer service, encourage local partnerships and guide future development planning efforts in the area. The creation of this plan has strengthened the relationship between the First Nations population in the valley and non-First Nation residents.

- Developed in consultation with Tourism Saskatchewan, the *Tourism Yorkton Community Action Plan* was released in June 2013. Its goals include increasing tourism revenues and visitation through managing and marketing the city as a tourism destination. Action steps are identified in 10 key areas to improve, expand and create tourism experiences and attractions throughout the city over the next three years.

- Preliminary work began with tourism operators and stakeholders in the Ogema and Big Muddy area who are interested in exploring opportunities and taking a more collaborative approach to attract visitation. Going forward, Tourism Saskatchewan will support the effort with both human and financial resources.

- Support was provided to the Trails of 1885 Association to complete an assessment of the sites in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba related to the 1885 Northwest Resistance. The report recommended expansion of the Trails of 1885 themed destination area to include Northwest Resistance and Louis Riel-related tourism product in Alberta and Manitoba. The association is presently engaged in establishing chapters in the three provinces and developing a three-year action plan to prepare for the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017.

- Tourism Saskatchewan, through its Industry Development department, is engaged in projects with four rural destination areas:

  Cypress Hills Destination Area (CHDA) – Tourism Saskatchewan provided financial support to CHDA to address several challenges and establish a more solid foundation. An Executive Director was hired, a new Board of Directors put in place and comprehensive strategic and board reviews completed. Recommendations are being enacted.

  Waskesiu & Area Wilderness Region (WWR) – The WWR is a well-established area with a stable membership and is financially sound. Tourism Saskatchewan provided support through the transition of leadership and is working closely with the new Executive Director.

  Watrous and Manitou Beach – Implementation continues on the *Watrous and Manitou Beach Community Tourism Plan* that was unveiled in 2012. In the past year, Tourism Saskatchewan has been active in monitoring and advising the area and has provided strategic advice on issues such as destination marketing funds, as well as opportunities to advance product development and area branding initiatives through various programs and workshops.

  Lake Diefenbaker Tourism Destination Area – The *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth: Vision 2020 and Beyond* identifies strategies for increasing economic benefits, including "strengthening tourism opportunities and improving Saskatchewan's parks and outdoor products, such as sustainably developing the lakefront potential around Lake Diefenbaker." Tourism Saskatchewan is working with the Ministries of Environment, Government Relations, Agriculture, Parks Culture and Sport, Highways and Infrastructure, and the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency on a process to facilitate the recreation and tourism development potential of provincial Crown land situated in the northeast section of the Lake Diefenbaker area. This will be a collaborative effort conducted by the Government of Saskatchewan, with input from the WaterWolf Planning District Commission and its affiliated members, Lake Diefenbaker Tourism and other area stakeholders.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:
FOSTERING OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Key Action:
Develop and utilize systems and processes to support effective communication and knowledge sharing

Results:

- An Information Technology Governance Committee was established to ensure all identified technology-related projects align with strategic objectives, and are prioritized and properly researched. Planning activities and projects were undertaken to address major technological trends impacting Tourism Saskatchewan and the tourism industry, including the proliferation of mobile devices, social media adoption in business and by consumers, unified communications, cloud computing and business analytics.

- Work was undertaken to consolidate the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council's online learning portal and implement a storefront application for industry sales and program enrollment.

- Enhancements to Tourism Saskatchewan's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system included tools to enable Field Representatives to optimize industry engagement in partnership opportunities. Improvements were also made to systems for coordinating data collection processes.

- Improvements and upgrades were made to data centre, desktop and mobile hardware components. Key software applications, including server operating systems, database server, Enterprise Resource Planning and website content management systems received upgrades.

- Tourism Saskatchewan's *Opportunities Catalogue* was completed for the second year. The catalogue is a comprehensive listing of programs, services and opportunities for advertising, marketing, training and industry development. The publication is housed online, allowing for continuous updates as programs are added, changed and/or revised.

- Revised editions of the *Tourism Business Development & Financing Guide* and the *Community Tourism Planning Guide*, reference manuals for prospective tourism businesses and communities, were printed in March 2014. They marked the first full publications to incorporate new government visual identity standards. Going forward, all Tourism Saskatchewan publications will be consistent with newly issued visual identity standards.

- Tourism Saskatchewan's new corporate logo was unveiled in 2013, following a thoughtful and comprehensive design process to create a symbol that is visually striking, speaks to the organization's new identity as a Treasury Board Crown Corporation and reflects its professionalism and high standards. A logo usage guide was assembled as a staff resource.

- Communication with the industry was conducted through a variety of mediums, including the quarterly newsletter *Going Places*, *IndustryMatters.com* website, and *Industry Update* and *Here & There* e-newsletters. Each is distributed to approximately 3,500 tourism industry operators and stakeholders. *IndustryMatters.com* had 18,132 visits, 13,505 unique visitors and 41,441 page views in 2013-2014.

- Tourism Saskatchewan professionals travelled the province and made face-to-face contact with industry, conducted meetings and delivered training during a total of 801 visits to 222 Saskatchewan communities.

  Spring, summer and winter tours were scheduled for CEO Pat Fiacco. Tours through southern Saskatchewan, areas in the west central and east central parts of the province and in northern Saskatchewan took place in April, May and June 2013. A number of industry dinners and meetings were hosted by Tourism Saskatchewan, attended by local operators and stakeholders. In July, the Candle Lake area was visited. A return trip to the east central area in January 2014 involved outdoor winter recreation and industry gatherings. Approximately 70 events, operator visits and meetings were included in itineraries for these tours.

- The *Tourism Saskatchewan Spring Workshop* was held April 25, 2013. Hosted in Regina, the industry event featured a keynote address and presentation by Roger Brooks, President and CEO of Roger Brooks International. Delegates benefitted from two informative sessions: "Marketing Mayhem and Madness" and "The 20 Ingredients of an Outstanding Destination." An additional presentation was held the following day for representatives of 15 communities, destination areas and destination marketing organizations. In a session titled "The Art of Branding a Community," Brooks demystified and explained the process of branding for umbrella organizations (multiple communities), cities, downtowns and marketing professionals. Through case histories, video clips, photographs and entertaining stories, participants were provided inspiration and some of the tools to create a successful brand.

- The annual *HOST Saskatchewan Conference* was held in Regina in December 2013. More than 150 delegates attended the two-day forum that offered valuable networking and educational sessions. The conference provided a platform for announcing the new *Saskatchewan Event Hosting Strategy*. Feedback from attendees will be put to use in planning upcoming conferences. An electronic survey, distributed in January to 3,500 industry representatives and stakeholders, yielded additional information for conference planning.

- Tourism Saskatchewan organizes the annual *Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala* and administers the online nomination process. The 24th annual gala was held in Regina on April 25, 2013. Forty-three award finalists and recipients were honoured. More than 100 submissions were received for the 25th annual *Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence*. The finalists were announced in February 2014.

- Tourism Saskatchewan coordinates provincial nominations for the *Canadian Tourism Awards*, held in conjunction with the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's (TIAC) annual *Tourism Congress*. In 2013, 31 nominations were submitted, with four finalists from Saskatchewan honoured at the celebration in Ottawa last December.

Key Action:
Identify and integrate innovative and creative solutions to achieve continuous improvement

Results:

- Organization structural changes were made to better align particular functions. The changes included the creation of a Research and Planning department, functioning under Corporate Services, and integrating Corporate Events with the Industry and Community Development division.

- Progress in automation and the transition to a paperless accounting system included an upgrade to accounting software, introduction of electronic paystubs and greater use of the corporate intranet site. Efficiencies gained through streamlined processes allow employees to focus their efforts on program delivery rather than administrative tasks. Continual process review remains a priority.

- Program Reviews were conducted on the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council, the Quality Assurance Program and Visitor Reception Centres (VRCs). Research gave consideration to declining visitation at the VRCs and to advancements in technology that have changed the way travellers plan their vacations and acquire information. A decision was made to close the VRCs at Langenburg and Lloydminster and conduct pilot projects with Tourism Yorkton and the Lloydminster Cultural and Science Centre. Grants will assist community visitor service operations in Yorkton and Lloydminster to enhance their existing year-round services and provide greater benefits to travellers along the Yellowhead Highway corridor. Visitor Reception Centres at Fleming, North Portal and Maple Creek will continue to be operated by Tourism Saskatchewan.

  The changes to Visitor Services complement the investments Tourism Saskatchewan has made to strengthen its online, mobile and social media presence, and reach greater numbers of consumers through the channels commonly accessed by travellers.

- Preliminary work began on a complete redesign of the consumer site *TourismSaskatchewan.com*. Visits to the dedicated mobile site *2sk.ca* were up 71 per cent over the previous year. A fishing-specific site, *fishing-in-saskatchewan.com*, was moved to an internal server, given a new look and feel to more closely match the primary website and populated using a new content management system and ad-serving tool. In recognition of the impact that major events have on tourism-related economic activity, *Saskatchewan-Events.com* was launched to help promote major events and support the goals of the *Saskatchewan Event Hosting Strategy*.

Key Action:

Support an internal culture that encourages continuous employee development to ensure a committed and engaged workforce

Results:

- Employee engagement was integral to the strategic planning process. Staff participated collectively in a facilitated session to discuss and provide feedback on draft strategic priorities. During department planning sessions, employees contributed to detailed business plans for their respective units. These business plans form the basis for individual work plans that will ensure alignment with Tourism Saskatchewan's strategic priorities.

- For a fourth consecutive year, Tourism Saskatchewan earned the *Employer of Choice* designation. The tourism *Employer of Choice* program recognizes excellence in human resource practices and employee satisfaction. The Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council-administered program saw an increase in participation in 2013. A total of 15 businesses earned the title *Employer of Choice*, four more than in 2012. Program evaluation and redevelopment began at the end of the fiscal year, with an upgrade to be implemented in 2015-2016.

- An application and adjudication-based process was established for professional development activities, recognizing the joint benefit gained by the organization and its employees through the ability to upgrade current and acquire new skills. Thirty-one submissions for professional development were approved.

- Two Access and Privacy and Record Retention information sessions were delivered to ensure employees are aware of their responsibilities regarding *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and *The Saskatchewan Archives Act*.

- All-staff quarterly meetings are scheduled, with employees participating through various technological modes. The meetings provide a forum for regular organizational updates and encourage staff engagement among the various departments.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Elk Ridge Resort

Deliverable	Performance Measure	Unit	Benchmark (2011/2012)	2013/ 2014
Marketing	Total marketing partnerships with industry	#	1,329	1,698
Marketing	Total expenditure of industry partners involved in marketing activities	$	904,752	1,111,710
Events	Total industry partnerships in events supported by Tourism Saskatchewan	#	16	24
Events	Tourism Saskatchewan expenditure on supported events	$	1.2 million	3 million
Training Delivery	Participants in training programs	#	3,329	4,357
Quality Assurance Program*	Accredited tourism operators	#	n/a	n/a
Product Development*	Quality tourism experiences	#	n/a	n/a
Industry Outcomes	**Performance Measure**	**Unit**	**2011/2012**	**2013/2014**
Tourism Revenues	Total expenditures by travellers in Saskatchewan	$	2 billion	2.12 billion
Visits	Visits both same day and overnight in Saskatchewan	#	11.9 million	12.5 million
Employment **	Number of individuals employed in tourism-related profession	#	57,300	55,600

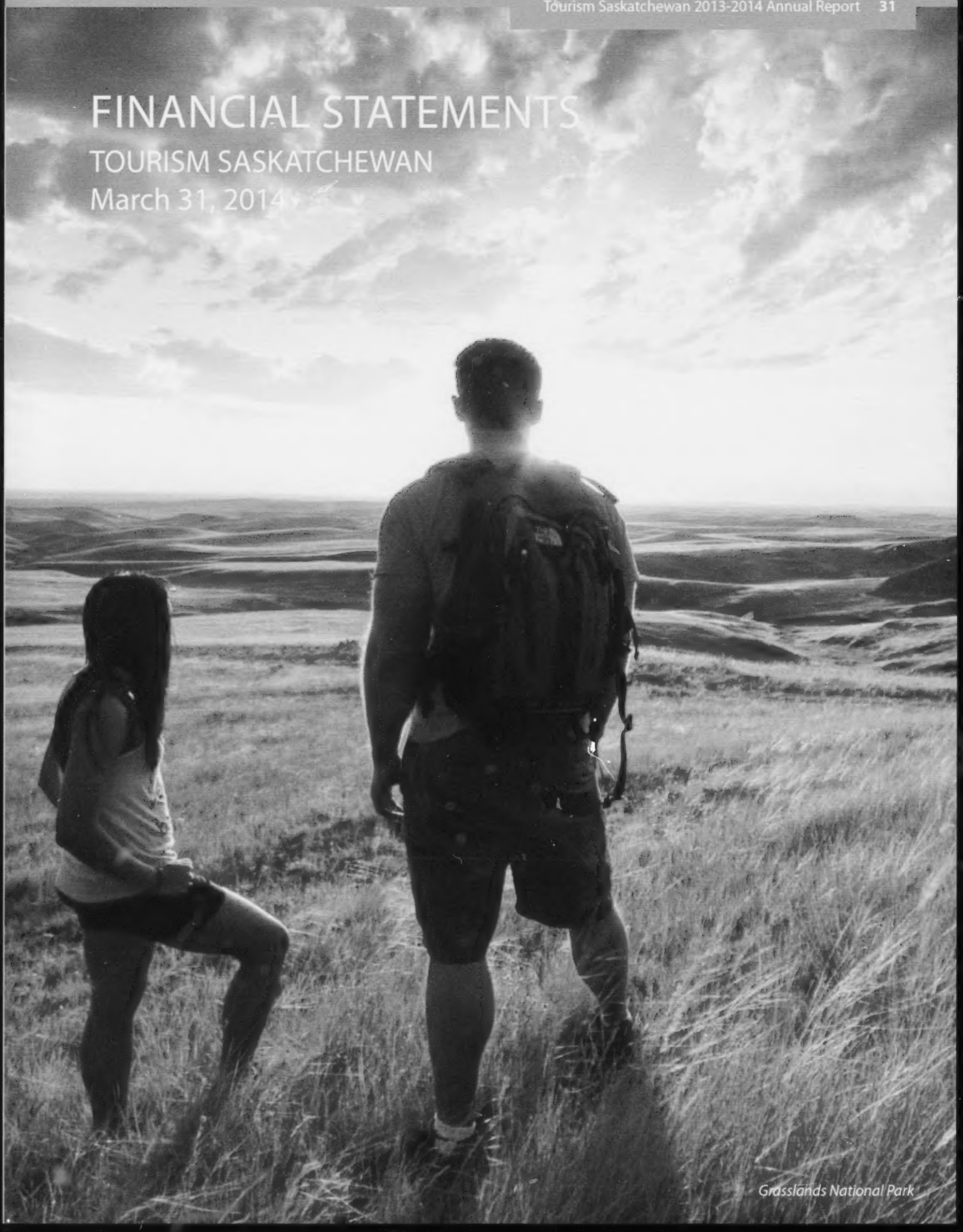
* New program to begin implementation in 2014/2015

** Employment declines are often a result of inability to fill positions rather than a reduction in jobs available

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

TOURISM SASKATCHEWAN

March 31, 2014



Grasslands National Park

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan:

Management is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the accompanying financial statements, including responsibility for significant accounting judgments and estimates in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting principles and ensuring that all information in the Annual Report is consistent with the statements. This responsibility includes selecting appropriate accounting principles and methods, and making decisions affecting the measurement of transactions in which objective judgment is required.

In discharging its responsibilities for the integrity and fairness of the financial statements, management designs and maintains the necessary accounting systems and related internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that transactions are authorized, assets are safeguarded and financial records are properly maintained to provide reliable information for the preparation of financial statements.

The Board of Directors and Audit Committee are composed entirely of Directors who are neither management nor employees of Tourism Saskatchewan. The Board is responsible for overseeing management in the performance of its financial reporting responsibilities, and for the approval of the financial information included in the Annual Report. The Audit Committee has the responsibility of meeting with management and external auditors to discuss the internal controls over the financial reporting process, auditing matters and financial reporting issues. The Audit Committee is also responsible for recommending the appointment of Tourism Saskatchewan's external auditors.

MNP LLP, an independent firm of Chartered Accountants, is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to audit the financial statements; their report follows. The external auditors have full and free access to, and meet periodically and separately with, both the Audit Committee and management to discuss their audit findings.

May 21, 2014

Chief Executive Officer

Chief Financial Officer

AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Tourism Saskatchewan, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2014 and the statements of operations, changes in net financial assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian Public Sector accounting principles, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Tourism Saskatchewan as at March 31, 2014 and the results of its operations, changes in net financial assets and its cash flows for year then ended in accordance with Canadian Public Sector accounting standards.

MNP LLP

Regina, Saskatchewan

May 21, 2014
Chartered Accountants

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

March 31, 2014

	March 31, 2014 (Note 2)	September 30, 2013 (Note 2)
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Cash (Note 5)	$4,742,713	$3,294,207
Accounts receivable	343,400	2,176,342
Inventory for resale	4,600	8,960
	5,090,713	5,479,509
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$1,255,631	$1,165,355
Unearned revenue	201,373	66,878
	1,457,004	1,232,233
NET FINANCIAL ASSETS	3,633,709	4,247,276
NON FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Tangible capital assets (Note 6)	1,262,291	1,153,237
Prepaid expenses	201,095	89,955
	1,463,386	1,243,192
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	$5,097,095	$5,490,468

Contractual Obligations (Note 7)
Designated Assets (Note 8)

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD:

Director

Director

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the Period Ended March 31, 2014

	Budget 12 months ended March 31, 2014 (Note 2)	12 months ended March 31, 2014 (Note 2)	6 months ended March 31, 2013 (Note 2)
REVENUE			
Provincial Operating Grant (Note 9)	**$15,172,000**	$15,171,999	$7,920,913
Other Grants and Contributions	**1,498,243**	1,752,323	763,655
Sales of Products and Services	**578,295**	567,276	428,581
Certification and Training	**413,000**	264,788	130,647
Partnership	**514,350**	538,164	101,082
Interest and other	**46,200**	114,345	34,321
	18,222,088	18,408,895	9,379,199
EXPENSES (Schedule 1)			
Administration	**4,418,082**	3,908,133	1,724,204
Marketing	**6,467,897**	7,125,168	2,743,694
Industry Development	**3,981,554**	4,485,727	714,086
Education and Training	**2,321,165**	2,342,398	1,331,146
Visitor Services	**1,033,390**	940,842	305,647
	18,222,088	18,802,268	6,818,777
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE PERIOD	-	$(393,373)	$2,560,422
Accumulated surplus - beginning of period	**5,490,468**	5,490,468	2,930,046
Accumulated surplus - end of period	**$5,490,468**	$5,097,095	$5,490,468

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET FINANCIAL ASSETS

For the Period Ended March 31, 2014

	Budget 12 months ended March 31, 2014 (Note 2)	12 months ended March 31, 2014 (Note 2)	6 months ended March 31, 2013 (Note 2)
Surplus (deficit) for the period	-	$(393,373)	$2,560,422
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(403,000)	(484,503)	(147,175)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	350,000	375,449	154,430
	(53,000)	(502,427)	2,567,677
Purchase of prepaid expenses and supplies	-	(111,140)	26,441
Increase (decrease) in net financial assets	(53,000)	(613,567)	2,541,236
Net financial assets - beginning of period	4,247,276	4,247,276	1,706,040
Net financial assets - end of period	$4,194,276	$3,633,709	$4,247,276

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the Period Ended March 31, 2014

	12 months ended March 31, 2014 (Note 2)	6 months ended March 31, 2013 (Note 2)
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Surplus (deficit) for the period	$(393,373)	$2,560,422
Items not requiring cash:		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	375,449	154,430
Net change in non-cash balances relating to operations:		
Accounts receivable	1,832,942	(1,447,269)
Inventory	4,360	510
Prepaid expenses	(111,140)	(26,441)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	90,276	90,028
Unearned revenue	134,495	36,356
	1,933,009	1,368,036
CAPITAL ACTIVITIES		
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(484,503)	(147,175)
	(484,503)	(147,175)
Increase in cash	1,448,506	1,220,861
Cash, beginning of period	3,294,207	2,073,346
Cash, end of period	$4,742,713	$3,294,207

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2014

1. STATUS OF TOURISM SASKATCHEWAN

Tourism Saskatchewan was established pursuant to *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act* proclaimed on July 1, 2012. Tourism Saskatchewan is a Treasury Board Crown Corporation within the meaning of *The Crown Corporations Act*, 1993. Tourism Saskatchewan is a continuing corporation of Saskatchewan Tourism Authority, established under *The Tourism Authority Act* on October 1, 1994. Tourism Saskatchewan promotes Saskatchewan as a tourism destination by providing in-province and out-of-province marketing of tourism, industry-government marketing programs, the provision of visitor services, market research and tourism product development, including tourism programs with a particular focus on supporting major sporting and cultural events for Saskatchewan.

Tourism Saskatchewan is exempt from income taxes under the *Income Tax Act*.

2. CHANGE IN FISCAL YEAR

In accordance with Order in Council 635/2012 dated November 28, 2012, the fiscal year of Tourism Saskatchewan changed from October 1-September 30 to April 1-March 31. These statements have been prepared based on the 12-month period ended March 31, 2014 and the six-month period ended March 31, 2013. The 2014 budget was approved by the Board of Directors on February 25, 2013 and appears on Statement 2.

3. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a. Basis of Accounting
These financial statements are prepared by management in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards for provincial reporting entities established by the Canadian Public Sector Accounting Board.

b. Measurement Uncertainty
The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian public sector accounting standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reporting amounts of assets and liabilities, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities, at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of the revenues and expenses during the period. Items requiring the use of significant estimates include accounts receivable, accrued liabilities and amortization.

Estimates are based on the best information available at the time of preparation of the financial statements and are reviewed annually to reflect new information as it becomes available. Measurement uncertainty exists in these financial statements. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

c. Cash
Cash comprises monies on deposit and is recognized at its fair value. Fair value is approximated by the instrument's initial cost in a transaction between unrelated parties.

d. Inventory
Inventory for resale is valued at the lower of cost and net realizable value. Cost of merchandise is determined principally on a first-in, first-out basis. Inventory cost includes the costs of purchase plus other costs, such as taxes and transportation that are directly incurred to bring inventories to their present location.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2014

e. **Tangible Capital Assets**
Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost, which includes amounts that are directly related to the acquisition, design, construction, development, improvement or betterment of the assets. Cost includes overhead directly attributable to construction and development, as well as interest costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition or construction of the asset. Tangible capital assets are amortized over their estimated useful lives. Amortization expense is calculated using the straight-line method at the following annual rates:

Photo library	10% to 20%
Furniture and equipment	10% to 20%
Computer equipment and systems	25% to 33%
Leasehold improvements	10%
Signs and displays	20%
Video and video footage	20% to 33%

When tangible capital assets no longer contribute to Tourism Saskatchewan's ability to provide goods and services, they are written down to residual value.

f. **Revenue Recognition**
Grants and contributions are recognized as revenues when the grant or contribution is authorized, any eligibility criteria are met, and reasonable estimates of the amounts can be made, unless the transfer stipulations establish a liability, in which case revenue is recognized as the stipulations are met.

Other revenue, which includes partnership, sales of products and services and interest revenue, is recognized in the period in which the transactions or events occurred that give rise to the revenue.

g. **Grants to Clients**
Grants provided to clients for a variety of programs are recorded as an expense by Tourism Saskatchewan when it approves the transfer and the recipient meets the eligibility criteria.

4. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Tourism Saskatchewan's financial instruments include cash, accounts receivables, accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The carrying amount of these instruments approximate fair value due to their immediate or short-term maturity. These instruments do not have significant interest rate or credit risk.

5. CASH

Tourism Saskatchewan has access to an operating line of credit in the amount of $500,000, repayable on demand with interest paid monthly, at the TD Bank prime rate. As of March 31, 2014, Tourism Saskatchewan has not drawn on the operating line. In 2013, there were no draws on the operating line.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2014

6. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	Photo library	Furniture and equipment	Computer equipment and systems	Leasehold improvements	Signs and displays	Video and video footage	2014 Total	2013 Total
Cost								
Opening Balance	$358,491	$168,097	$915,798	$1,295,310	$29,282	$1,679,666	$4,446,644	$4,299,469
Additions	-	81,290	185,081	-	27,614	190,518	484,503	147,175
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Write-downs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing Balance	358,491	249,387	1,100,879	1,295,310	56,896	1,870,184	4,931,147	4,446,644
Accumulated Amortization								
Opening Balance	328,756	121,906	682,289	451,508	29,282	1,679,666	3,293,407	3,138,977
Amortization	12,398	18,290	171,603	129,531	5,523	38,104	375,449	154,430
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Write-downs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing Balance	341,154	140,196	853,892	581,039	34,805	1,717,770	3,668,856	3,293,407
Net Book Value	17,337	109,191	246,987	714,271	22,091	152,414	1,262,291	1,153,237

7. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

Contractual obligations include:

Leases
Tourism Saskatchewan has entered into leases for office premises, Visitor Reception Centres and storage space at various locations in the province.

Operational
Tourism Saskatchewan has operating agreements that enable day-to-day operations of the corporation.

Program
Tourism Saskatchewan has program-related obligations to assist Saskatchewan's tourism industry operators to market their products and to develop and promote the quality of tourism products and services in Saskatchewan, including tourism programs with a particular focus on supporting major sporting and cultural events for Saskatchewan.

	Leases	Operational	Program	Total
2014-15	$674,996	$119,996	$1,676,696	$2,471,688
2015-16	692,473	20,504	-	$ 712,978
2016-17	704,994	16,369	-	$ 721,363
2017-18	716,155	-	-	$ 716,155
2018-19	620,781	-	-	$ 620,781
thereafter	3,441,852	-	-	$ 3,441,852
	$6,851,250	**$156,870**	**$1,676,696**	**$8,684,816**

Contractual obligations do not include those contracts which are paid on a usage basis.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2014

8. DESIGNATED ASSETS

Tourism Saskatchewan is holding $2,216,000 as designated assets to be spent on the following programs in future years.

- Marketing Campaigns $1,340,000
- Event Hosting Program $876,000

In 2013, Tourism Saskatchewan had designated assets of $2,500,000 for the following:

- Marketing Campaigns $1,500,000
- Event Hosting Program $1,000,000

9. PROVINCIAL OPERATING GRANT

Tourism Saskatchewan receives grants from the General Revenue Fund out of monies appropriated by the legislature or authorized by Order in Council. From April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014, Tourism Saskatchewan received $15,171,999 from the Ministry of the Economy.

10. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Included in these financial statements are transactions with various Saskatchewan Crown corporations, ministries, agencies, boards and commissions related to Tourism Saskatchewan by virtue of common control by the Government of Saskatchewan and non-Crown corporations and enterprises subject to joint control or significant influence by the Government of Saskatchewan (collectively referred to as "related parties").

Routine operating transactions with related parties are settled at prevailing market prices under normal trade terms. These transactions and amounts outstanding at year end are as follows:

	2013-14	2012-13
Accounts Receivable	$123,900	$99,619
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	85,100	91,050
Other Revenue	719,611	220,006
Expenses	1,635,003	775,093

11. D

Tourism Saskatchewan participates in the Public Employees' Pension Plan (PEPP), a defined contribution plan. Tourism Saskatchewan's obligations are limited to matching contributions made by the employees, up to a rate of 7.25%, for current services. From April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014, Tourism Saskatchewan contributed $425,576 (from October 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013 - $200,822).

12. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain comparative figures have been re-classified to conform to the current year's presentation.

SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES

Schedule 1 - Expenses by Program For the Period Ended March 31, 2014

	Administration	Marketing	Education & Training	Industry Development	Visitor Services	12 months ended March 31, 2014 (note 2)	6 months ended March 31, 2013 (note 2)
Salaries	$1,428,851	$2,047,422	$812,755	$919,903	$610,039	$5,818,970	$2,825,220
Benefits	283,133	331,165	138,040	141,442	109,705	1,003,485	457,947
Professional Services	458,982	226,909	1,007,224	52,105	73,152	1,818,372	826,578
Advertising	-	3,165,688	-	-	9,500	3,175,188	634,946
Promotion and Other Marketing	56,991	177,587	48,031	405,932	107,001	795,542	253,594
Print	-	295,489	29,044	7,116	-	331,649	318,952
Travel	42,838	441,139	22,168	38,195	21,511	565,851	233,055
Board and Committees	19,201	-	-	-	-	19,201	21,030
Rent and Equipment Purchases	912,550	3,009	10,240	-	4,216	930,015	476,645
Supplies and Services	195,704	26,599	44,834	6,464	4,373	277,974	155,307
Other Related Business Expenses	134,434	47,500	16,062	110,883	1,345	310,224	101,465
Amortization	375,449	-	-	-	-	375,449	154,430
Grants	-	362,661	214,000	2,803,687	-	3,380,348	359,608
Total	**$3,908,133**	**$7,125,168**	**$2,342,398**	**$4,485,727**	**$940,842**	**$18,802,268**	**$6,818,777**

Photography by Calvin Fehr, Greg Huszar Photography, Eric Lindberg, Ian McGregor

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